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LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

DANCE NOTES

A pioneer of modern dance goes East with works of social, arts commentary

While the Martha Graham Dance Company holds forth at the Brooklyn Academy of music, another pioneer of modern dance makes a rare New York appearance at the Joyce Theatre starting Tuesday.

Bella Lewitsky, born in California in 1916, has steadily produced work influenced by social issues and by her love of the visual arts.

In the family tree of modern dancers, she stands (like Alvin Ailey) as a direct descendant of Lester Horton, with whom she founded in 1946 the country's first racially integrated dance troupe. She remained with the Los Angeles Dance Theater as Horton's lead dancer and chief muse until 1950, when she left to form the first of three companies bearing her name.

Her present troupe, now marking its 28th season, has been seen in more than 20 countries worldwide but seldom performs on the East Coast. Her season at the Joyce Oct. 4-9 represents her first New York City appearance in 15 years.

Programs include "Episode #4: Turf," choreographed a year after the L.A. riots, and "Confines" from 1982, reflecting the emotional effects of entrapment. Lewitsky, you may recall, is the ardent First Amendment defender who sued the National Endowment for the Arts in 1990 over the "obscenity clause" placing conditions on the acceptance of grant monies.

Also featured are "Impressions #1 (Henry Moore)" inspired by that artist's sculptural studies of the female form, and "Meta 4," her latest work set to a quartet commissioned from Mexican composer Robert X. Rodriguez.

Curtain time is 8 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 2 and 7:30 p.m. Sunday. Tickets priced at $25 are available at the Joyce, 175 Eighth Ave. at 19th Street.

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Two New Jersey country dancers were among finalists in the Marlboro Country Nights Dance Showdown, a nationwide competition involving 125 clubs and $150,000 in prize money.

Northeast regional finals were held in late September at Denim & Diamonds, New York City's hottest club for Western-style dancing. Chris Thompson of Great Meadows and Cyndi Dorber of Hopatcong won the $1,000 club championship, finishing second behind Scott Heath and Christie Harlow of Richmond, Va.

Heath and Harlow are now practicing for the national finals, scheduled Dec. 7 in Dallas, Texas. Regional champs will compete there for a $10,000 purse.

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/hfwy0004